



# thirteen ways of looking at a fish



Chaz  
 [cvillette](#)

<https://cvillette.livejournal.com/>  
2008-01-08 20:35:00

MOOD: 🤢 crappy

MUSIC: Alton Brown - Doctor Strangeloaf

Okay, two. Which is like thirteen when you're sick.

God, is it over yet?

I got on the scale this morning. Daphne, you don't want to know. I will eat the  *fucking*  sorbet. And some clam chowder. As soon as I get off the internet. I'm sorry.

Yes, I know it's a goddamned eating disorder. God damn it.

Memo to me: a sick Chaz is a foulmouthed and grumpy Chaz.  
Sorry.

Anyway. Moving on now. Alton has sock puppets performing the part of belching yeast. I will never stop watching this show. On sourdough starter: "Kind of like having a pet that you raise and feed and take care of and then bake and eat."

I wish I could maintain a starter. That would be awesome. The random travel/living alone thing makes it hard, though. A starter is probably at least as much work as a cat.

And as promised, recipes:

I eat a lot of salmon, because it's a protein I can use to dress up all the carbs without too much fat, and hey, fish oil. So, for  [leahbobet](#) (<https://leahbobet.livejournal.com/>), here are two good recipes.

The first one is the easy one.

You get a salmon fillet, skin on, and a cast-iron frypan. You salt both sides of the salmon and you heat the frying pan and put some sesame oil in. When the oil is hot but not smoking, you put the salmon in skin side down and sear it. If you like rare salmon, take it out of the pan as soon as the skin is crispy, and serve it

sunny-side down, over rice, beautiful crispy delicious skin side up.  
This is nice with soy sauce.

The second one is all complicated and stuff. And stuffed, also.

So what you do is you make rice, which can be brown rice or white rice, and when it's cooked you season it with diced canned tomatoes (or fresh plum tomatoes in season, but don't bother with the supermarket ones. canned are better.) and dill and salt and pepper and lemon juice.

Before and also during the time while the rice is cooking, you caramelize some onions. Onions are easy but time consuming to caramelize. Basically, you take onions and butter or oil and you cook them together on the stovetop **on the low end of medium-low** until the onions turn brown and sweet. This takes a long time. And it does not work if you try to hurry it.

Okay. Once you have the onions and the rice, you take your baking dish and you put fresh dill and lemon slices on the bottom. Then fetch your salmon from the fridge.

If you have a whole salmon, butterfly it first (take out the backbone and ribs with your very sharp knife). If you have steaks or filets, just put them in the bottom of your baking dish, skin side down in the case of filets. Then you cover the flesh side with a layer of onions, and the layer of onions with a layer of fresh spinach, and the layer of fresh spinach with the rice with tomatoes and lemon and dill in it. You can put more lemon slices and fresh dill on top.

And then you put the whole mess in the oven and bake it at 350 degrees until the salmon is tender and nummy, and serve it in great big drippy scoops with bread to mop up the juice.

And now I need to suck down more NSAIDs and crawl back into bed again.

Wonder if anybody in the metro area will deliver clean sheets.  
Sigh.

**TAGS:** [recipes](#)



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### [locked] Dream Journal

All right, unconscious mind. We're coming to an accommodation. If the dreams are you cleaning

### Elvis doesn't live here anymore.

Hey there. Sorry about the drama. It was... it was an emotional decision, and I didn't

### Poppets.

Puppets. Puppet puppets. Scary.

88 comments



beatriceeagle

January 9 2008, 02:10:32 UTC

COLLAPSE

Mmm. Salmon's just about the only seafood I eat, so these might be useful.

Except I can't stand it rare, like most meat, so I'd have to go with the second recipe.

Also: please eat the sorbet or the chowder or something. I like unstarved friends.



cvillette

January 9 2008, 02:25:44 UTC

COLLAPSE

if you don't like it rare, turn it over and cook the other side.

Sorry, should have said.

Feverish.

Eating sorbet. \*sigh\*

beatriceeagle

January 9 2008, 04:23:09 UTC

COLLAPSE

Aha! If I can cook it all the way through, then that sounds great!

And good. Eat. You have nothing to fear from me, being made of Internet as I am, but I think that trollcatz would beat you up if you didn't.



civillette

January 9 2008, 04:24:26 UTC

COLLAPSE

And she hits hard.



trollcatz

January 9 2008, 04:38:23 UTC

COLLAPSE

Only when I barndoors and my hand goes flailing out into space, and then only if someone's in the way.

(Yeah, that was tonight. I shamed you in absentia. Sorry, sensei. Nobody in the way, though, so no one wounded.)

(Dude? We miss you SO MUCH at the gym. Please eat the yucky sorbet and stuff and get well.)

 **cvillette**  
[January 9 2008, 04:48:41 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

You went two days in a row?

Wow.

You are getting buff.

Who belayed you?

 **trollcatz**  
[January 9 2008, 05:17:06 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Tasha.

 **trollcatz**  
[January 9 2008, 05:24:14 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Okay, yes, we talked about you. It was all good.

 **cvillette**  
[January 9 2008, 05:58:36 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

0.0

\*heart... weak...\*

\*dark... tunnel... closing...\*

Wait a minute, what am I worried about? We're just friends.

 **trollcatz**  
[January 9 2008, 06:00:52 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Um, that was sort of the subject. Of the conversation.

 **cvillette**  
[January 9 2008, 06:01:52 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

...



 [trollcatz](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:03:54 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Oh, good grief, I don't know how to say this. Dude, your laid-back may be a little excessive, maybe.



 [cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:07:48 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

yeahbut. She. I.

Er.

Um.

What did she \*say,\* exactly? Please speak slowly. I slept about sixteen hours today.

Which is why I am all insomniac now, but whatever.



 [trollcatz](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:09:34 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

She wanted.

To know.

If you.

Like.

Girls.



 [cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:11:35 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

!

!!

Um.

Yes?

I mean, I went to the thingy with her. In the monkey suit. I would not do that for somebody I didn't like.

Or do you mean like, like girls in the high school sense?



[trollcatz](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:17:02 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Never in my adult life has any other friend gotten me into a conversation like that. And given my adult life, that's sayin' somethin'.

Which is lucky, because I wouldn't do it for anyone but you.

Platypus, yes. "Like girls" in the high school sense. Girls as a particularly intriguing subset of humanity.



[cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:20:34 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Well, I mean, I'm not like totally crushed out on her or anything. Which is not to say she isn't cute. And nice.

But--

--It's completely fucking stupid to still be pining for somebody I dated for two whole weeks, who dropped me like a hot rock, isn't it?



[trollcatz](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:26:41 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

...

No, Platypus, hon. Not at all.



[cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:32:51 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Oh, shit. I dunno. Am I stringing Tasha along? Do you think? Because not the plan, y'know. I do like her. I maybe even like her like her.

I just don't really, really like her.

O, the drama. I should invest in llamas. I could make a killing.



[trollcatz](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:57:17 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Being friends is not stringing along. And you're a good friend. Don't go all wonky on her because of this, man. If you're not sure, you're not sure. She'll bring it up if she wants to.

I know, sixteen hours, but you really ought to be asleep...



 [cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 07:00:08 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Yeah well. I can go lie down and plan where I will paint the glow in the dark stars on my bedroom ceiling, anyway.

I will try not to be wonky. Grgh. She's a nice girl. I do not want to be a jerk.



 [trollcatz](#)

[January 9 2008, 07:04:01 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

I always wanted glow-in-the-dark stars on my bedroom ceiling.

Whatever you do, you will not be a jerk.



 [cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 07:06:05 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Let's paint some. You can have Southern Hemisphere. I will have Northern.



[\*\*\\*penny drops\\*\*\*](#)

 [cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:13:01 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

...she thinks I'm gay?

odear. Um. Please insert standard "some of my best friends" disclaimer here. Best friend. You knew that, right?

[\*\*Re: \\*penny drops\\*\*\*](#)

 [asciikitty](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:15:52 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

cutest. platypus. ever.



[\*\*Re: \\*penny drops\\*\*\*](#)

 [cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:18:01 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Oh, not you too.

This is all because I let O. do that thing to my hair.



[\*\*Re: \\*penny drops\\*\*\*](#)

 [trollcatz](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:24:25 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

No, it's because you don't flirt with anyone who might flirt back and *mean* it.



[Re: \\*penny drops\\*](#)

 [cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:27:48 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

...

I don't? Okay, I mean I'm maybe not so great at the whole smooth thing. But I flirt back!



[Re: \\*penny drops\\*](#)

 [trollcatz](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:22:15 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Yes. No. She wants to know if you're not interested in *her* that way, or if you're not interested in *females* that way, or maybe just not interested in being interested.

It's not a yes or no question.

Well after all, look who's talking.



[Re: \\*penny drops\\*](#)

 [cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:25:11 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

I'm, um. Interested in being interested in her? Kind of? But also kind of thinking maybe the chemistry isn't there?

It's not like *she*'s been acting interested!



[Re: \\*penny drops\\*](#)

 [trollcatz](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:29:44 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Re acting interested: check calibration on measuring instruments, make sure? (I am not saying you're wrong; I wasn't watching.)



[Re: \\*penny drops\\*](#)

 [cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:34:08 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

...and Dad fires me for not even being able to run a profile on my own personal life.

Hah!

Or maybe for excessive sick time.

(\*snorfle\*)



 [trollcatz](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:37:09 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Oh, like he'd know--he hasn't been back in either.

And I really wish one of you had taken me up on that bet about Mom, because I would have won it.



 [cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:40:11 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Poor Mom.

Still not back in? That bodes not well for me.

Duke? Cowboy?



 [trollcatz](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:43:34 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

She managed until noon. I give her another day, and good odds on her being back on Thursday.

Cowboy was a late-bloomer; he's going to be a no-show all week and part of next. Duke, on the other hand...

Well, Duke. Who's to say, ya know?



 [cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:47:53 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

It's either ebola, or he'll be in tomorrow.



[Re: \\*penny drops\\*](#)

 [trollcatz](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:50:13 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Also, you know, you don't *have* to be interested just because she is. Life is like that sometimes. It's up to you, buddy.



[Re: \\*penny drops\\*](#)

 [cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:52:04 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

I think that's against the guy code of ethics.

You know, I've never broken up with anybody? I'm always the dumpee. This is probably due to cowardice.



0.o  
 [cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 05:53:56 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

...I think I feel a relapse coming on.

Or maybe I should just enter the Witless Projection Program now, and beat the holiday rush.

...what did you talk about?



**Re: 0.o**

 [trollcatz](#)

[January 9 2008, 05:59:17 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Nothing that wasn't good. I swear. Crissycross heart.



**Re: 0.o**

 [cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:02:43 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

I fear you. So very much.

Really.

You do not need to instill proper respect in me.



**Re: 0.o**

 [trollcatz](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:46:27 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

I realize that. \*g\*

 [leahbobet](#)

[January 9 2008, 03:27:06 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Mmm. Thank you. I will post mine!

(And I am amused now, because all day I have held in my head--

*It was evening all afternoon.*

*It was snowing*

*And it was going to snow.*

--for the title of my metrics post tonight. Because that was the exact quality of my day.)



 [cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 03:36:26 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

No snow here. Just March in January.

And snot, with a forecast of continued snot. And a nauseated front moving in from the west.

 [leahbobet](#)

[January 9 2008, 03:37:58 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Boo.

Try and get ahold of some wasabi? Sushi with *heavy* wasabi always exorcises the snot demons from within me.



 [cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 03:48:04 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Ugh.

Food.

Do not want.

Do you have any idea how weird that is?

 [leahbobet](#)

[January 9 2008, 03:49:26 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

I do. I hate when that happens. And I don't even have the eating disorder. :/



 [cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 06:17:08 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

The Solidarity of the Anorexics. It's the first album by Ideal Platypus.

 *Deleted comment*



 [cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 07:02:09 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

It's a pub and a band. And possibly a soft drink.

 [matociquala](#)

[January 9 2008, 07:02:51 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

(step right up. step right up.)



 [trollcatz](#)

[January 9 2008, 04:39:59 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Okay, if that's what Alton Brown is like, I might have to start watching. Bwah-ha-hah! Eeeuuw!



[cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 04:48:01 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

That was mild. You would like him.

Also, he (or his production team, more likely) builds giant scale models of wheat proteins out of styrofoam. And uses a blowtorch as a kitchen tool.



[trollcatz](#)

[January 9 2008, 05:18:46 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Giant styrofoam protein models!!!! <3 <3 <3 !!!!



[cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 05:57:20 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

And lots of Science!



[kelliem](#)

[January 9 2008, 17:28:58 UTC](#)

Edited: January 9 2008, 17:29:06 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

Personally I liked the model space shuttle substituting for a wheat kernel. ;D



[cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 17:30:38 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

It's just like a wheat kernel!

Only not!



[kelliem](#)

[January 9 2008, 17:33:25 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

The best part was the 'sprout' inside the cargo bay. ;D



[trollcatz](#)

[January 9 2008, 20:09:48 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

I have so got to start watching this. Why did no one tell me????



[Ometotchtli](#)

[January 9 2008, 20:10:42 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

We thought you would be traumatized by the food-preparation parts.



[cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 20:11:44 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

And the sock puppets.



[cvillette](#)

[January 10 2008, 01:29:19 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Today, he's demonstrating cooking meat with ballistics gel.

 [inaurolillium](#)

[January 10 2008, 04:21:44 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

The blowtorch is pretty common equipment in professional kitchens. Those dinky ones you get in creme brulee kits are crap. The terra cotta pots, not so much.

But Alton is full of awesome. I have a couple of t-shirts from his store. One says, "SCIENCE! It's what's for dinner!" and the other depicts him as a gadget-belted superhero declaring "Death to Unitaskers!"



 [cvillette](#)

[January 10 2008, 04:33:34 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Well, sure, how else do you make creme brulee?

But I'm trying to sell up to a WOV\*!!

(\*Woman Of Violence.)

 [inaurolillium](#)

[January 10 2008, 04:41:31 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

And baked Alaska. Absolutely essential for Baked Alaska. (I hate Baked Alaska, but any excuse to get out the torch.)

Seriously, a kitchen is full of sharp things, hot things, and heavy things with handles. What's for a WOV to NOT like? But if that's not enough, well, Alton also has a tendency to pull out various power tools, have 2ft flames on the stove, and to get verbally clobbered by a small woman known only as W.



 [cvillette](#)

[January 10 2008, 04:52:11 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

...actually, we kind of work with W.'s badder-ass twin.

Imagine W. as a full-contact martial arts champ. With a Glock.

 [inaurolillium](#)

[January 10 2008, 04:58:20 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Ooooo... Scary/Awesome.

There you go then, tempt her with, "Hey, Alton has \_\_\_, only with kitchen gadgets instead of guns!"

They got me to watch Office Space by saying something similar.

 [hawkwing\\_ib](#)

[January 9 2008, 20:17:49 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Mmm, fish. That recipe made my mouth water, even though I only ate a couple minute ago.

(I need to get fish soon.)



[cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 20:23:24 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Do you have good fish markets over there?



[hawkeying\\_ib](#)

[January 9 2008, 20:35:11 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Eh. Not really. All the fish gets sold to big businesses, warehoused, and shipped back out to shops. Can't exactly buy it fresh from the pier, most places.

I know (or used to know) one good place where you can get good fish from an independent fisherman, though, so I may go on a Quest this weekend to see if it's still there.

(did you see Charlie today? It was nearly enough to sell me on getting a coyote calendar, even if I am over-calendared this year.)



[cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 20:41:43 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

I did! That was an extra-good one, wasn't it?

Here, you can get good fish regionally--Baltimore for crab and so on--or if you go to a high-end shop. But pretty good farmed salmon isn't too hard to come by, if you are picky about where you shop.

And we have Chinese markets where the fishmongers will pull the fish out of the tank and murder it before your very eyes. Which is probably hard to beat for freshness.



[hawkeying\\_ib](#)

[January 9 2008, 20:48:26 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

It really was.

The last couple of times I've bought salmon it's tasted like cardboard. So I'm thinking I want to get my hands on good white saltwater fish - sole or plaice or maybe even whiting and f cod was not a)practically impossible to acquire in any decent size because of being b)overfished, it'd be on that list, too - fresh from the pier.

*the fishmongers will pull the fish out of the tank and murder it before your very eyes*

Mmm. Sounds *tasty*.



[cvillette](#)

January 9 2008, 20:52:02 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

Oh, that's sad about the salmon.

I should learn how to cook whitefish.

 [hawkwing\\_lb](#)

January 9 2008, 20:58:19 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

You mean there's something you *don't* know how to cook?

\*momentary boggle\*

Sole, plaice, whiting (and cod) are good grilled or pan-fried. Flavour to taste. Lemon, dill, pepper and parsley (individually or in combination) are my favourites.

Cod is really, really good in (sticky, not flakey) batter, with vinegar and fried potato bits. IMO.

\*has cravings now\*

But you probably know this already, right? ;)



[cvillette](#)

January 9 2008, 21:03:54 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

No, I grew up in Vegas.

Fish either comes frozen in boxes, shaped into sticks, and you bake it on a cookie sheet in the oven, or it is something you get on Friday night if you are staying with a Catholic family, with breadcrumbs on top, baked into shoe leather.

I didn't know it was good until I was in college, and Ramona--this girl I used to jump with--dragged me for sushi and teriyaki salmon and broiled yellowtail collar. But I never got around to learning how to cook whitefish.

It's... er. Not very calorie-dense.

 [hawkwing\\_lb](#)

January 9 2008, 21:12:30 UTC

[COLLAPSE](#)

Wow. You must've stayed with dour, strict, unimaginative Catholics. Fish on Fridays is like, pre-Vatican II doctrine, afaik.

(Could be wrong. I grew up sort-of semi-Catholic-agnostic. And Catholic-ethos schools are great at turning out doctrine-ignorant agnostics and atheists, have you noticed? :P)

*It's... er. Not very calorie-dense.*

This is true. But tasty.

But if you grill or fry in batter, depending on how you make your batter, the calorie content goes way up. :)



[cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 21:14:03 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

There are still enough American catholics that do the no-meat-on-Fridays thing that most cafeterias have a Friday fish option.

(I do like fish and chips. But they make that at restaurants.)

[hawkwing\\_ib](#)

[January 9 2008, 21:17:05 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

That's interesting.

*they make that at restaurants*

Somehow, I don't find that *quite* the same. :P

(Though mind you, it's years since I had home-cooked fish-in-batter. Must dig out the recipe.)



[cvillette](#)

[January 9 2008, 21:20:03 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

post it when you do?

[hawkwing\\_ib](#)

[January 9 2008, 21:24:24 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

It'll probably be March by the time I have time to do anything more time-consuming than Student Cookery, but when I do, sure.



[Ometotchtli](#)

[January 9 2008, 21:21:40 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Ideally with Guinness. Make that two Guinnii.

[hawkwing\\_ib](#)

[January 9 2008, 21:25:21 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Beer batter. Nom.

[inaurolillium](#)

[January 10 2008, 04:26:05 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Better than beer batter: [vodka batter](#). The bubbles formed are even more irregular than with beer batter, so you get an even crispier coating.

 [hawkwing\\_ib](#)

[January 10 2008, 21:11:35 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Ooo.

*Deleted comment*



 [cvillette](#)

[January 10 2008, 01:15:53 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

I could fridge it when I'm away, I guess. But that seems so harsh.

*Deleted comment*



 [cvillette](#)

[January 10 2008, 23:53:21 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Poor little wild yeasts. All work and no play.

 [arcaedia](#)

[January 10 2008, 02:40:02 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Try this one:

Spicy Salmon with Tomatoes and Star Anise

<http://www.of2minds.org/spice/archives/001123.html>



 [cvillette](#)

[January 10 2008, 03:14:21 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

...I will.

 [leahbobet](#)

[January 11 2008, 00:00:15 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

...oh hi.

All those things appear to be in my kitchen at this very moment.

What to do, what to do? :D

---

[locked] Dream Journal

All right, unconscious mind. We're coming to an accommodation. If the dreams are you cleaning

Elvis doesn't live here anymore.

Hey there. Sorry about the drama. It was... it was an emotional decision, and I didn't

Puppets.

Puppets. Puppet puppets. Scary.